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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted of persons who had taken the College Level Examination Program General Examinations during the previous four years to obtain their reactions to the CLEP Program and the concepts of "degree by examination." Two questionnaires (one sent to those who had requested that their scores be sent to colleges and one to those who had not) were sent to a random sample of 4,000 individuals who took the CLEP General Examinations at testing centers other than those established at colleges and universities for incoming students. The return rate was slightly more than 40%; 1,614 were used for statistical analyses. The respondent sample contained a disproportionate number of high scorers. Analyses were conducted to answer a variety of questions: who takes CLEP and why?; how did they originally learn about the program?; awards of credit and placement; other benefits of CLEP; attitude toward degree by examination; problems with colleges after taking the CLEP; what are the programmatic implications of serving the unorganized, nontraditional student. Comments from respondents are provided in an appendix. (KM)

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RDR-72-73, NO. 6

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PROJECT REPORT
PR-73-5 APRIL 1973

College Level Examination Program: Its Meaning to Participants

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Patricia Lund Casserly

EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE
PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

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COLLEGE LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM: ITS MEANING TO PARTICIPANTS

Patricia Lund Casserly

In 1965, the College Entrance Examination Board, "with the generous help of the Carnegie Corporation of New York," established the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) to enable those who have reached the college level of education in "nontraditional" ways to demonstrate their achievement and to use their test results in seeking college credit or placement. The Program offers two types of examinations, the General Examinations and the Subject Examinations. Both kinds are designed to measure factual knowledge and understanding as well as the ability to see relationships and apply basic principles to new problems. The General Examinations are focused on certain fields that most colleges feel are important for everyone, regardless of special interests or occupational goals. These fields are English Composition, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences-History, and Humanities. Colleges usually require students to demonstrate a certain competency in each of these fields during the freshman and sophomore years before engaging in more advanced and specialized work. The Subject Examinations, on the other hand, are comparable to the final, or end-of-course, examinations in specific undergraduate courses.

At its inception CLEP was designed primarily for nontraditional students, i.e., those who did not proceed directly from high school to college in the conventional way, but rather for those who had gained their education outside the classroom through correspondence study, television courses, independent study, on-the-job training and experience, and so on. An increasing number of "traditional" students have also found CLEP a useful

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medium for gaining college credit. However, it is with the former, non-traditional group that this study is chiefly concerned.

The Survey

In the spring of 1972, Educational Testing Service conducted a survey of persons who had taken the CLEP General Examinations during the previous four years to obtain their reactions to the CLEP Program and the concept of "degree by examination."

Different questionnaires were sent out to those individuals who had requested that their scores be sent to colleges and to those who had not. Both questionnaires contained a common core of biographical and attitudinal questions designed to elicit the following types of information:

1. How did CLEP takers find out about CLEP? Which sources of information were most effective?

2. What was their motivation for taking the CLEP General Examinations--in order to further their formal education, for job advancement, for personal satisfaction or evaluation or what?

3. What were the effects of taking the exams, including not only concrete effects such as receiving credit or qualifying for a better job, but changes in self-image or self-esteem as well as changes in educational, vocational or life plans?

4. Having participated in CLEP, how do the respondents feel about the concept of college credit by examination? About the difficulty and relevance of the CLEP examinations they took? About the need to offer CLEP tests in areas not now covered?

5. And finally, for those who wished to continue their education, what were the problems connected with doing so? Are there services that the College Board or other agencies might provide to alleviate some of the problems? In the discussion of this last group of questions it is important for the reader to remember that CLEP is a new and dynamic program and that steps have already been taken to solve many of the "problems" mentioned by respondents who may have taken CLEP several years ago.

Sample Selection

A random sample of 4000 individuals who took the CLEP General Examinations at testing centers other than those established at colleges and universities for routine evaluation and placement of incoming students was drawn, with 1000 from each of the following academic years: 1967-68, 1968-69, 1969-70 and 1970-71. It was so drawn that within each year, half of the subjects had requested CLEP scores be sent to colleges and half had not. Within these subgroups an effort was made to include equal numbers of both sexes. However, for the year 1967-68, this condition was only approximately met.

Description of the Sample

Of the 4000 questionnaires sent out in February 1972, 346 were returned undelivered by the post office, 1708 were returned completed for a return rate of somewhat greater than 40%. Of these 1708, 94 were returned too late to be included in the statistical analyses. CLEP scores for respondents and nonrespondents were then compared to provide some indication of the representativeness of the obtained sample. This comparison (see Table 1) indicated that the respondent group achieved significantly higher scores

Table 1

Comparison of Respondents and Nonrespondents on CLEP General Examinations Mean Scores

Test	Respondents N	Respondents Mean	Respondents S.D.	Nonrespondents N	Nonrespondents Mean	Nonrespondents S.D.
*English Comp.	1496	485	95	2112	471	98
*Humanities	1493	499	92	2030	484	93
Mathematics	1301	468	84	1837	465	88
*Natural Sciences	1420	482	95	1955	469	99
*Soc. Sci.-History	1498	511	85	2031	495	91

*The difference in mean scores for the two groups is significant at the $p < .01$ level.

on all but the mathematics exam. Therefore, we cannot say that the respondents are truly representative of the entire population of CLEP takers. Nevertheless, from the size of the standard deviation we can say that the sample includes a broad range of students.

Characteristics of Respondents

The sex, age, and educational aspirations of the respondent groups are shown in Table 2. It is interesting to note that there are about three males for every two female respondents. Although the median age of respondents is in the 41 to 50-year-old category, nearly one-fourth are 25 or younger. Because this latter group can be thought of as being composed of individuals of typical college-going age, and because they could be assumed to be closer to their secondary school experience, most data analyses were done separately for the over and under 25-year-old groups.

The highest level of education desired by 6% of the respondents is the Associate of Arts degree while 36% aspire to the Bachelor of Arts. Another 28% of the respondents hope to attain a masters degree and 13% are aiming for the Doctorate. Clearly, CLEP takers are an ambitious group.

In Table 3 a comparison of the CLEP scores of those respondents who requested that their scores be sent to a college and those who did not shows that the former group did significantly better on each of the five exams than the latter, and that the patterns of performance differed slightly, i.e., although both groups scored highest in Social Sciences-History, followed by Humanities, and both did least well in Mathematics, the differences in mean scores across groups varied from 37 points on the Natural Science Exam to 7 points on the Humanities Exam. At this point, the reader should be cautioned against saying "Of course, the

Table 2

Characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Percent (N = 1614)
Sex	
Male	60
Female	39
No Response	1
Age on Last Birthday	
20 and under	12
21-25	13
26-30	14
31-35	12
36-40	12
41-50	23
51-60	15
61 and older	1
Educational Aspirations	
Associate Degree	6
Bachelor's Degree	36
Master's Degree	28
Doctorate	13
No degree planned	10
No response	8

Table 3

A Comparison of the CLEP Scores of Respondents Who Requested Their Scores Be Reported to a College and of Those Who Did Not

Test	Scores Sent to a College			Scores Not Sent to a College		
	N	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.
**English Comp.	675	500	96	821	472	91
**Humanities	682	506	81	811	493	93
**Mathematics	589	493	91	712	447	72
**Natural Sciences	643	505	99	777	465	87
**Soc. Sci.-History	685	520	85	813	503	85

**The difference in mean scores for the two groups is significant at the $p < .01$ level for all examinations.

people who scored lower didn't want their scores sent to college because they thought they had done too poorly to be considered for college credit." Although this is true in some cases according to the comments of respondents in free response items on the questionnaire, there are other confounding factors, many of which are associated with the relative ages of the respondents. Of those 756 respondents who had ETS send their scores to colleges, approximately half were 25 or younger. In contrast, the 858 respondents who did not request official score reports were more than seven times as likely to be older than 25. Older respondents may be correct when they tell us that they feel that the number of years away from a formal educational setting, curricular changes, and their unfamiliarity with strategies for coping with multiple choice tests depressed their scores, or the differences may merely be due to bias in the responding sample.

As would be expected from experience with the SAT, CLEP test performance is also related to sex (see Table 4). Females scored higher than males on the English Composition (32 points) and Humanities exams (22 points), while males scored higher in Math (31 points), Natural Sciences (39 points), and Social Sciences-History (31 points).

When we break down test performance by sex within age groups, slightly different patterns emerge. Males under 25 scored best in the Natural Sciences, followed by Math, Social Sciences-History, English Composition, and Humanities, while females scored best in English closely followed by Math (only 9 points difference), Humanities, Social Science, and Natural Science. In the over-25 age group males scored highest in Social Sciences-History followed by Humanities, Natural Sciences, Math, and English. Females in the over-25 age group did best in Humanities followed by English, Social Sciences-History, Natural Sciences, and Math.

Table 4

CLEP Test Performance by Sex--Combined Forms

Test	Male N	Male Mean	Male S.D.	Female N	Female Mean	Female S.D.
English Comp.	896	472	92**	588	505	95*
Humanities	900	491	89**	582	512	94*
Mathematics	810	480	85*	480	448	80
Natural Sciences	867	498	94**	542	458	90*
Soc. Sci.-History	904	523	86*	583	491	81

*Significant at .05 level

**Significant at .01 level

Table 5

Mean CLEP Scores for Those under and over 25 Subdivided by Sex

	Under 25				Over 25			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	x	S.D.	x	S.D.	x	S.D.	x	S.D.
English	502	90	547	88	466	93	506	95
Nat. Sci.	551	97	520	99	484	94	464	84
Math	545	94	537	91	472	76	427	49
Humanities	495	78	525	81	491	95	527	94
Soc. Sci.-Hist.	520	87	521	83	526	88	499	79

Who Takes CLEP and Why?

Who were these CLEP takers? In age, outlook, and occupation they were as diverse as the larger society. One was a precocious 14-year-old boy who wanted to enter college early. At 18 he is now in graduate school. Several septuagenarians wanted to see if they were as "bright as they thought they were" and if they had "kept up" with the younger generation. In between were recent high school juniors who wanted to graduate a year early from "boring" high school classes and high school graduates who wanted to save time and money in pursuing baccalaureate and advanced degrees (and often to skip "dull and wasteful introductory college courses"), middle-aged men and women who had never had a chance to get formal college education or who wanted to prepare for "second careers," men in shops and factories who wanted job advancement, and women in paraprofessional and professional fields who needed "certification" for permanent employment. There were men in the military or about to return from it and men in jail. There were persons who were looking forward to their first job and those looking forward to the time for study they hoped retirement would bring. There were janitors, dishwashers, writers, "would be" lawyers and CPAs, librarians, policemen, company presidents, and stockbrokers. The reasons our respondents gave for participating in CLEP are presented in Table 6. In looking at this table one should keep in mind that respondents could check as many reasons as they felt relevant; therefore, the categories are not exclusive.

Although the desire for college credit, <u>following a previous decision to continue formal education</u>, was the most frequently mentioned motivating factor for taking the exams in both groups, "personal curiosity" was second.

Table 6

Percent of Respondents by Age Group Who Mention Various Reasons for Taking the CLEP General Examinations

	25 and Under	Over 25
1. Had definite plans to continue education and hoped to get college credit	79	68
2. For personal curiosity to see how my present knowledge of the field compared to that of regular college students	24	40
3. For job advancement	6	25
4. To qualify for some sort of certification or licensing such as permanent teaching or library science certificates or as prerequisite to CPA examinations	3	15
5. Was thinking about possibly continuing formal education, but first wanted to see how I would do	8	30
6. Required by college	19	11
7. Other, such as prerequisites for entrance to MBA or Law programs	12	10

The "over 25s," as we might expect, were more than four times as interested in job advancement and three times more interested in qualifying for some sort of certification or licensing than were members of the younger group. More members of the older group also seemed to need some external assurance that they were capable of college level work before making firm plans for further formal education than did members of the younger group. This is not surprising when we look at the number of years that had passed between the time the respondents had last attended a class in a formal educational setting and the first time they took CLEP examinations.

While 71% of the younger group took the exams within one year of their last formal education (and we may assume that most of them were in high school or were new high school graduates), more than half of the older group had been away from a "formal" educational setting for over 10 years, and over 30% had left the classroom more than 21 years before! These data are presented in Table 7.

Regardless of years away from a formal educational setting, the groups are remarkably similar in the number of years of formal education completed at the time they took the CLEP examinations, as can be seen in Table 8. More than 87% in each group had at least a high school diploma or its equivalent at the time of taking the exams. But as many persons over 25 remarked when commenting on their performance on the tests, "Kids are a lot smarter today than we were; they study things in high school that didn't exist for us."

Although a considerable length of time between the end of formal schooling and the taking of the CLEP examinations existed for many respondents, they had engaged in a variety of other educational activities,

Table 7

Years between Last Class in Formal Educational Setting and First Taking CLEP Examinations

Years	Under 25 %	Over 25 %
1 or less	71	21
2	6	4
3	5	3
4	8	2
5-9	6	11
10-15	< 1	14
16-20		12
21 or more		31

Table 8

Years of Formal Education Completed

at the Time CLEP Was Taken

Years	25 and Under %	Over 25 %
8	< 1	< 1
10	< 1	4
11	8	2
High School Graduate or General Examination Diploma	50	46
1 year college	19	18
2 years college	11	14
3 years college	2	5
More than 3 years college	5	4
Other (college graduate, certificate from foreign institution, etc.)	< 1	4
No response	3	4

as can be seen in Table 9. Not surprisingly, the number of different activities engaged in by respondents was positively related to the length of years away from full-time education. The breadth of individual interests, particularly among women is striking. Although some men reported studying "two years in electrical engineering, painting and graphics" or "paleontology, civil engineering, orchestration (at N. E. Conservatory of Music) and city planning," men tended to have pursued interests in the fields related to their present or anticipated vocations such as "enteric bacteriology, atypical microbacteria, biological warfare and blood banking" or "industrial management, mathematics, engineering and computer science." The list of subjects studied by women was marvelously diverse, a not unusual list follows: "Business and real estate law, biology, music appreciation, history of art, oil painting, work simplification, techniques of supervision, public relations and child development." Another ran, "economics, psychology, cake decorating, teaching the exceptional child, religion and Spanish." Still another, "criminal law, child care, numerology, architecture, psychedelics and history" in that order. Many, many lists were three times as long, but after reading hundreds of similar lists it is plain that one woman spoke for many when she wrote, "I hope you expand the Program . . . . As far as I'm concerned, CLEP is where Women's Lib is at!"

Respondents also report high participation in cultural activities not necessarily related to <u>specific</u> educational goals (see Table 10). During the past year more than half reported reading fiction and nonfiction books, using a library, attending plays, ballet or art movies, visiting a natural history or science museum, or zoo, and visiting art galleries or museums. Slightly less than half also attended public lectures or concerts. We assume

Table 9

Some Types of Educational Activities Engaged in by Respondents between the End of Formal Education and Taking CLEP Examinations

	Percent
Studied on my own using newspapers, magazines and books	58
Took a course (or courses) sponsored by a college for credit	43
Participated in an on-the-job training program	32
Studied at a technical, trade or business school	23
Took adult education courses	23
Took a noncredit course (or courses) sponsored by a college	20
Took training or a course sponsored by a government agency	18
Took courses offered by the Armed Services	15
Studied a course offered by a correspondence school	14
Studied a correspondence course offered by a college or university	8
Took courses offered by the U. S. Armed Forces Institute (USAFI)	8
Was involved in a training project sponsored by a church or community	8
Studied at home via cassettes or records	5
Took a TV course	4
Studied with a book club	3
Participated in travel-study program	2

Table 10

Percentage of Respondents Reporting Various Activities during Past Year

	Percent
Read nonfiction books	90
Read fiction books	76
Used library	74
Attended play, theatre, ballet, art movie	68
Visited natural history, science-technology museum, or zoo	64
Visited art galleries or museums	63
Attended public lectures	48
Attended concert, rock festival, jazz session	48

that the number of respondents who participated in such activities is actually higher than our statistics show, because some respondents who chose not to complete several detailed items on the questionnaire nevertheless attached general comments from which we can infer lively participation.

How Did CLEP Takers Originally Learn about the CLEP Program?

Nearly half of respondents 25 and under said they first learned of the Program from a college catalogue or college admissions officer. Friends or relatives were instrumental in introducing another fourth of this group to the Program. (One wonders what the source of their information was!) Slightly under 10% mentioned newspaper or magazine announcements and 5% mentioned radio or television announcements. The remaining 10% listed posters in public places, the military service or USAFI, and "someone at work" with equal frequency. For those over 25, magazine and newspaper announcements were the most frequently mentioned sources of information about CLEP; they were listed by 30%. College catalogues and counselors were listed by 25% and co-workers or supervisors were listed by 22%. Friends and relatives were initial sources of information for 15%. Radio and television commercials were original sources of information about the Program for nearly 10% of this group, while the military or USAFI was mentioned by 4% and posters in public places were mentioned by approximately 3%. The percentages reported here for the older group add up to more than 100, so some respondents obviously checked two or more sources of "original information." From their comments, it is impossible to disentangle which source was most significant to them, so we counted both sources. For example, "I saw this man talk about CLEP on the Today Show, and then when

I got to work, my supervisor and I got to talking about it, and he said, 'Hey, he was talking about you. Why don't you try it?' So I did."

Once respondents knew about the CLEP Program, their decision to participate in it was made rather quickly, for 67% within 3 months (another 15% within 6 months). Two respondents took the exams the day after they read about it at the company where they worked. However, taking the exams was more often delayed until respondents could arrange the time off from family or work and the transportation to a testing center. Some traveled more than 100 miles each way to get to a testing center. Others wanted to contact surrounding colleges to see what their policies on CLEP would be and how a program for further education could be worked out before they actually signed up. This proved to be a disheartening and time consuming task for a large number of respondents. Several contacted up to 10 colleges in their areas that had been listed in the CLEP brochure as "participating" only to be told that no one knew what the policy was. (This happened when the respondents had their personal score reports in hand as well.) All did, obviously, take the examinations in due course, but many had then decided to do it for "personal satisfaction" rather than in immediate hope for credit. Even so, the general hope of over 90% of respondents is (was) for a college degree when personal lives and finances and college policies or the existence of a super-accrediting agency that will grant a certification or degree for credit by examination will make it possible.

Hopefully CLEP takers no longer experience the problems referred to above. Colleges are now required to have definite CLEP policies before being listed as "participating institutions" and prospective candidates are urged to "first call, write or visit the college you wish to attend

to inquire about its policy on CLEP scores as well as its other admissions requirements."

Awards of Credit and Placement

Whatever the age and sex of the respondents, CLEP scores are positively related to the amount of credit received by those who requested their scores sent to colleges. Table 11 shows that scores of males and females over 25 were more closely related to awards of credit than were scores of the 25 and under group. Males under 25 received the greatest average number of credit hours (17.5); females 25 and under received credit averaging 13.5 hours. In the older group, females were granted an average of 11 hours credit but males averaged only 9 credit hours.

Regardless of the amount of credit given to individual persons, we know that the acceptance of individual examination scores of persons who requested ETS to send their scores to college has increased over the last four years as is shown in Figure 1. In 1967 only 47% of this group was given credit for the Social Sciences-History exam; in 1970, the figure had climbed to 55%. In 1967, 28% of the scores in Natural Sciences were accepted for credit; in 1970 the figure rose to 53%. In 1967, 36% of the Humanities scores won credit, in 1970 the figure rose to 52%. In 1967, 32% of the scores in English were accepted; in 1970 the percentage had risen to 45. In 1967, 23% of the math scores were accepted for credit; in 1970, 38% were given similar treatment.

These figures must be interpreted with great care, however, for we know from reading the questionnaires that one large university and several smaller universities gave approximately 100 graduating high school seniors

Table 11

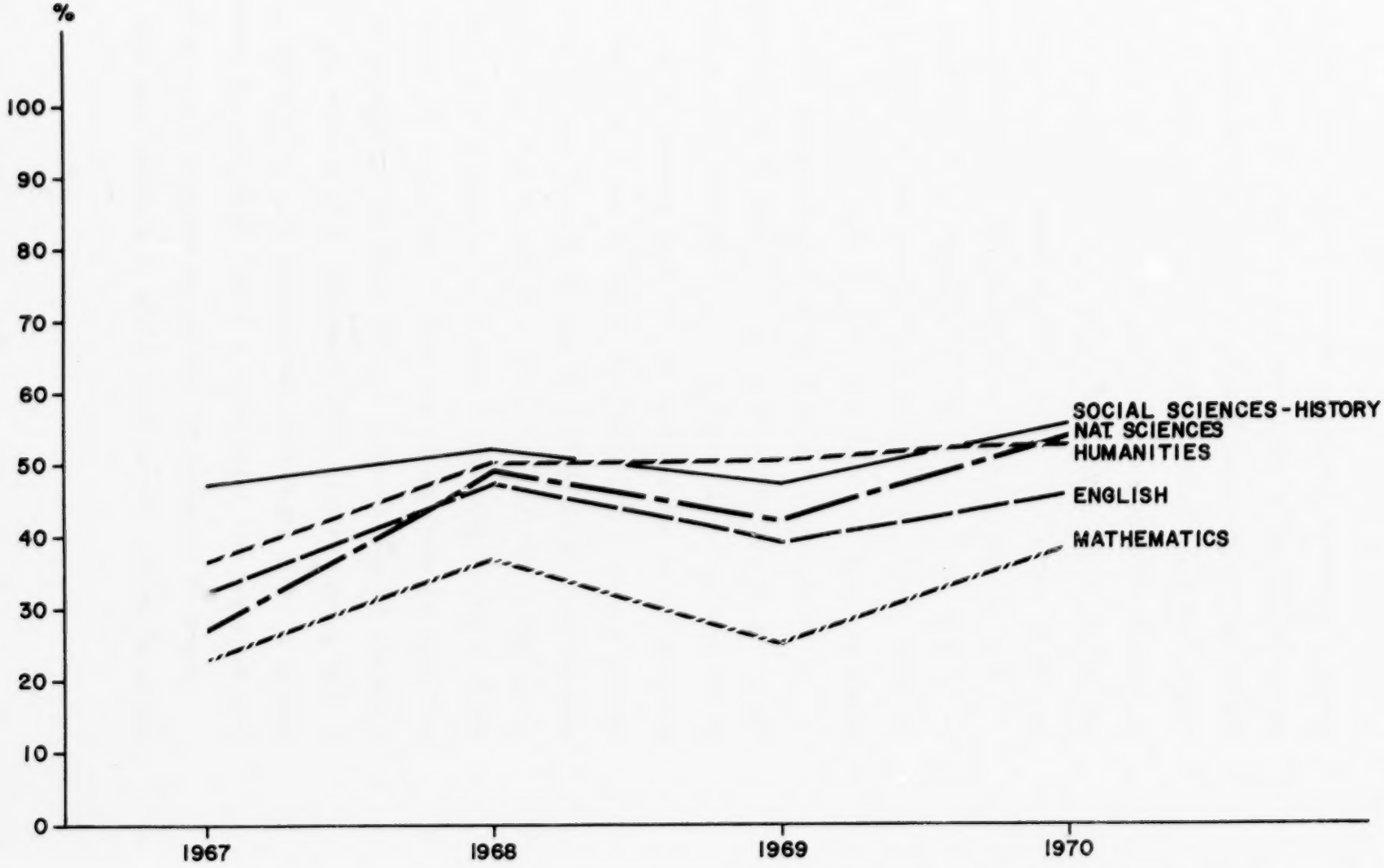
Correlations of CLEP Scores with Amount of Credit Received by Those Who Requested Their Scores Be Sent to College

Test	Under 25				Over 25			
	Male		Female		Male		Female	
	n	r	n	r	n	r	n	r
English Comp.	146	.15	136	.24*	187	.25**	115	.53**
Humanities	147	.12	120	.22*	207	.26**	123	.51**
Mathematics	126	.25*	106	.27*	180	.20*	98	.46**
Natural Sciences	141	.31**	116	.28*	192	.22**	111	.33**
Soc. Sci.-History	148	.19*	130	.08*	201	.27**	121	.48**
Average no. of credit hours	17.5		13.5		9.0		11.0	

*Significant at .05 level

**Significant at .01 level

Fig. 1. Percentage of Respondents Sending Official Score Reports to Colleges Who Were Granted Some Credit, by Examination Field.



either a semester's, a year's, or, even in some cases, two years' credit for general education requirements on the basis of their scores on the total CLEP General Examinations package in 1970 on an experimental basis rather than on individual test scores within the series. These students could not be excluded from the data analyses, yet they were following the "traditional" educational place of entering college directly from secondary school, albeit on a higher level than if they had not scored "satisfactorily" on CLEP.

When we look at awards of credit irrespective of particular examinations we see more clearly the growth of acceptance of CLEP as a vehicle for awards of credit. While only 55% of those sending official score reports to colleges earned any credit in 1967, 78% did so in 1970.

At the outset of the study we made one assumption that proved to be false: We assumed that colleges would require an official CLEP score report from ETS before awarding credit. However, we discovered this is not always the case, particularly when colleges are dealing with respondents who are over 25. Fortunately the answer to one of the items in the questionnaire sent out to those who had not requested official score reports does tell us whether or not they received any credit; it does not, however, tell us how much credit these people received. Of those seeking credit "on their own" only 15% were awarded any credit in 1967, but 44% gained credit in 1970. Although, for all the years reported those persons gaining credit constitute a lower percentage than those requesting official score reports; the trend upwards is still impressive, particularly since many in the latter group took the exams with other goals in mind. These data are presented in Figure 2.

Awards of placement for both groups are much less frequent than are awards of credit. Furthermore, awards of placement stay more constant over

the four years covered by this study. In 1967 only 10% of those requesting transcripts were given placement by their colleges; in 1970 the percentage had leveled off at 17%. Only 4% of those without official score reports were granted placement in 1967, while 10% were granted placement in 1970. Colleges seem much more willing to give general credit hours toward the degree than they are to accept scores on the CLEP General Examinations as indications of equivalent levels of competency in specific courses offered on their campuses.

Other Benefits of CLEP

Although awards of credit and placement, and the resultant opportunity to attain a college degree in less time for less money were of prime importance to a majority of respondents, there were a variety of other effects which accrued from participating in the CLEP Program. The most frequently mentioned positive benefits were increases in self-assurance which in turn led to increased aspirations and elevated goals. They were reported by 25% of the younger group and 40% of the older group. The examination results encouraged a majority of both groups to continue formal education whether or not they were granted credit or placement.

Indeed, for many individuals, trying to get colleges to consider their scores was a frustrating and, as time went on, a seemingly hopeless activity. Yet frustration was transformed into increased determination to earn a degree and they reported being enrolled in a regular college program. One determined respondent reported contacting over 100 colleges listed as participating before he decided to "give up" and get his degree the "usual way."

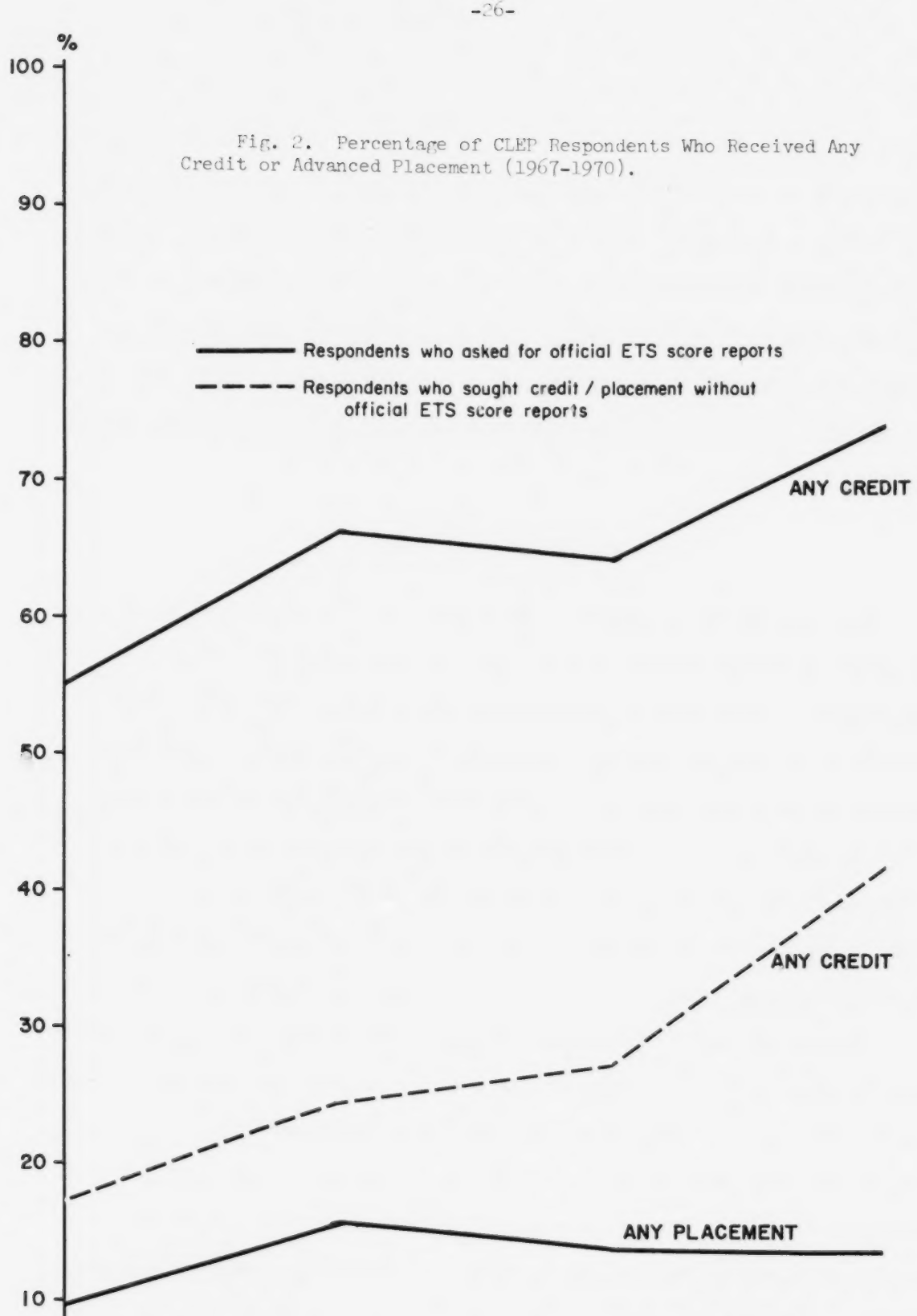


Fig. 2. Percentage of CLEP Respondents Who Received Any Credit or Advanced Placement (1967-1970).

For a healthy minority, some of whom have no access to or opportunity for college at this time, the results were a sufficient end in themselves. They proved what some respondents had "always known" and others had merely suspected, in that "I'm just as smart as those silver spooned, spoiled youngsters who have everything (a college education) handed to them."

In comparison, only 2% of the younger and 6% of the older group reported a lowering of self-image or depressed aspirations as a result of participating in the Program. And half of these in the over 25 group took their "poor showing" on one or another examination philosophically, as constructive criticism and evaluation that made them aware of areas in which they were weak and needed to "bone up." Only 3% of the younger and 2% of the older group felt the examinations were a complete waste of time and/or money.

Some Observations Based on Comments by Respondents

There were several open-ended questions included in the survey which were designed to encourage respondents to communicate both their general views of the CLEP Program and what it had meant in their lives as well as specific suggestions for its improvement. For some respondents, participation in the Program proved to be a much appreciated and unqualified success. (Many of these "success stories" already have been shared with the College Board staff and are being used for promotional purposes.) However, in many other cases, respondents either offered specific suggestions for improvement of the Program or were critical of some aspect of it.

It is to these comments and criticisms the following sections are addressed. A sample of verbatim comments on a number of problem areas may be found in Appendix A. The author hopes they will be helpful as an aid in further

development of the Program to policy makers on college campuses as well as at ETS and the College Board.

Difficulty and Relevance of CLEP Examinations

There were no specific questions in the survey which dealt with the difficulty of the examinations or their perceived relevance to the respondents' educational goals. However, some items obviously caused respondents to consider these topics, for they were mentioned frequently in general comments.

The Examinations--A Younger View

"Nothing so Mickey Mouse since sophomore year."

"Insulting."

"By the same wonderful people who brought us the Achievement Tests?"

"Is college going to be more multiple choice?"

Criticisms of the examinations were frequently made by respondents who took them in or just after graduating from secondary school. Happy as most of them were with the credit and placement awarded them by colleges, these critics found the examinations based too much on general knowledge and not academically rigorous enough. They doubted the exams' validity because the level was "so low" in relationship to their secondary school work. A few suggested CLEP be used to opt out of the last year of high school. Others commented that "if this represents college level work, heaven help us." This group was doubly relieved to be saving time and money in attaining a college degree even if they didn't respect the examinations. Others commented that the exams were "unreal" or "lacking in substance" in comparision to other College Board sponsored tests they had taken the same year.

The Examinations--An Older View

"These exams are for younger people."

"The questions were too specific, we need help in preparing . . . ."

"It's not what you know, but how you go about learning what you need to know."

Fewer older respondents were critical of the examinations and the intent behind them than were those who had taken them fresh out of secondary school. Also, criticisms from the older group tended to be more constructive. In relation to the examinations themselves, this group sometimes saw the questions as being too specific, particularly although not exclusively in mathematics. They pointed out that "math changed since I was in school" and besides, "I haven't used it since . . . ." If such specific knowledge (as reflected in test questions) is required by colleges in order for them to give credit, then this group wants directed study before they take the examinations. Many, many respondents, particularly those over 40, asked if reading lists or syllabi couldn't be provided and sent out with the application. Or if one couldn't buy such a syllabus, they would be interested in buying the study materials themselves from the CLEP Program.

Another group, also finding some test items too specific, took a different tack. They questioned the philosophical underpinnings of the test and its validity or relevancy as an indicator of success in further formal education. They felt CLEP should test "the ability to learn and use new knowledge" rather than that which has already been learned (or not learned). Others put it still another way. CLEP should test "logical thinking" and "the ability to make rational decisions." In short, this group thought that CLEP should test for mental processes rather than for content.

Interest in Taking Other CLEP Examinations

In spite of criticisms of one or another aspect of the examinations came statements of interest in taking more! Over 100 respondents stated

they would seriously consider taking the following examinations already offered by the Program: General Psychology, Human Growth and Development, American History, Business Law, Introductory Psychology, Computers and Data Processing, English Composition, English Literature, Western Civilization, American Literature, and American Government. The relative interest in taking these and other current CLEP examinations may be seen in Table 12.

In addition, respondents listed several hundred examinations that they would like to take that are not now offered by the Program. They fell into several categories of interest and concern. The most prominent among them are business and computer sciences, law, contemporary psycho-social problems (including urban planning and criminology), and education as well as a wide range of technical and vocational areas. Many respondents hoped courses in these fields would be offered on the graduate as well as upper division level.

Degree by Credit

Attitude toward degree by examination. Respondents were asked: "If the Program offered examinations on more advanced levels that would enable them to demonstrate completion of some college requirements (such as those for a major or minor) would they be interested in fulfilling them this way? More than 66% of those under 25 and 73% of those over 25 said that they would. "If it were possible to fulfill all requirements for a college degree by examinations that would be offered by CLEP would they be interested in doing so?" Fifty percent of the younger group said yes, as did 71% of the older group. But there were reservations to earning all of credit for the college degree by examination expressed by many in each group, even

Table 12

Number of Respondents Considering Taking

Each CLEP Subject Examination

Subject	No. of Respondents Seriously Considering	Subject	No. of Respondents Seriously Considering
Introduction to Business Management	170	Money and Banking	88
General Psychology	162	Introductory Marketing	87
Human Growth and Development	158	Statistics	74
American History	146	History of American Education	71
Psychology	142	Biology	70
Introductory Sociology	127	Tests and Measurements	56
Business Law	122	College Algebra	55
English Composition	122	General Chemistry	44
Computers and Data Processing	121	Introductory Calculus	42
Western Civilization	120	College Algebra-Trigonometry	35
English Literature	115	Geology	33
Composition	112	Clinical Chemistry	31
American Government	110	Microbiology	30
Introductory Economics	107	Afro-American History	28
Analysis and Interpretation of Literature	106	Trigonometry	26
Introductory Accounting	103	Hematology	24
American Literature	96	Immunohematology	17

among those who would take advantage of the opportunity--there being no alternative in their immediate future. These reservations centered around the ideas that a college degree should stand for more than could be demonstrated by objective tests and that there was something intangible, perhaps, but nonetheless real and valuable about the communication between students and teachers that takes place on college campuses. The ideal situation for most persons in the older group would be to combine individual study following a prescribed syllabus with "classroom" or group study and discussion--in a convenient spot whether it be on a campus or elsewhere. The idea is that at least some college level work is best done in the company of other students with a qualified teacher rather than "going it alone" even with a syllabus. Yet a number of respondents in remote areas with family responsibilities and jobs have little hope of ever getting to a college campus on, for example, a regular weekly schedule although they are interested in mini-courses which they could take in concentrated form during vacations.

Restricting factors. Apart from the lack of ability to be physically present on a campus for formal instruction, on a regular weekly basis, the most common hindrance to further formal education for 74% of the 25 and under age group is lack of money--for books, room and board, transportation, and tuition. The next most common barriers reported by this age group are the sheer number of years required to obtain the degree (reported by 59%) and the time to study within a given year (reported by 56%). The same three barriers were mentioned most frequently by the over-25 group--but more of them mentioned number of years required (77%) and the time to study (71%) as being problems than did respondents in the younger age group.

Money was also a problem for a sizeable number of members in this older group (67%). The lack of flexible class schedules geared to the lives of adults was a problem for 62%, and more than half of them (58%) found lack of opportunities for credit-by-examination and insufficient provision by colleges for transfer credit and credit for independent study, correspondence courses or on-the-job experiences, a hindrance to continuing their formal education (see Table 13). Nevertheless, a majority of the respondents are willing to set aside the time and money now in order to gain a degree.

Time. Sixty-two percent of the younger respondents and 69% of those over 25 claimed that they could devote time to study now. The amount of time that could realistically be spent by each group is presented in Table 14. Approximately half the individuals in both groups who answered this question felt that somewhere between 6 and 15 hours of study a week seemed realistic.

Money available for educational expenses. A total of 58% of those under 25 and 70% of those over 25 have some money as well as time to pursue a college degree by examination. In Table 15 are shown the percentages of those reporting various amounts of money available on a yearly basis for all expenses attached to earning a degree by examination, not merely examination fees.

More of those in the older group seem to have money for such a project, and they have more of it. This is not surprising, however, when we remember that many in the older group have raised their children or retired from the Armed Services and the like. Moreover, individual comments indicate that although some respondents could give no estimates of time or money now because of a job lay-off, health or other personal family problems, they saw these obstacles to pursuing their degree as temporary and fully expected to be able to make some investment in time and money within a year or two.

Table 13

Percentage of Respondents Reporting on Selected Factors Which Inhibit Their Continuing Formal Education

	25 and Under Group Percent (N = 437)	Over 25 Group Percent (N = 1175)
Cost, including books, room and board, transportation, as well as tuition	74	67
Number of years required for a degree	59	77
Insufficient provision for transfer credit, credit for independent study, correspondence courses or on-the-job experiences	34	54
Rigid class attendance requirements	25	47
Lack of adequate guidance and counseling for adults	33	48
Time to study	56	71
Lack of facilities, such as a library or a quiet place to study	22	24
Lack of child care facilities	9	14
Lack of opportunities for credit by examination	33	58
Lack of flexible class schedules geared to lives of adults	35	62
Requirements that students carry a full load of courses the last year before the degree	24	47

Table 14

Hours Per Week Respondents Could Put Aside for Study Individually or in Groups

Hours of Study per Week	Percent Under 25	Percent Over 25
1-5	11	9
6-10	14	27
11-15	15	16
16-20	10	12
21-25	4	3
26-30	2	1
31-35	0	3
36 or more	3	2
No response	41	29

Table 15

Percentage of Respondents Reporting Funds Available for Education by Degree, by Amount of Funds Available

Yearly Amount Available	Under 25	Over 25
Less than $50	4	3
$51-100	5	4
$101-200	8	11
$200-300	10	13
$301-400	8	10
$401-500	8	8
Over $500	15	21
	58	70

Problems

"Please send me my certificate."

"I have contacted all ten (participating) colleges in my state. Where should I go next?"

"Please, they say they never received my score report."

"I've answered your questions, now you answer mine."

There are a number of services that respondents expect from the College Board and ETS, and others they would like to be able to expect. Expectations in the former category sometimes betray misunderstanding on the part of CLEP takers as to what College Board is, how it functions, and what the limits of its powers are. Unfortunately, whatever the causes of this misunderstanding, the sponsoring agency has a credibility problem with some of its clients. They remember the Lincoln TV advertisement as "promising two years of college credit" for successful CLEP takers. They had missed the words "up to" and had assumed that awards by credit are much more automatic than they are. A few expected, and indeed asked us to send them their certificate stating they had completed the equivalent of two years of college. A far greater number asked for help in getting the colleges listed as participating to "come through." They were irate and then resigned to the failure of colleges to respond to their queries. Others, having been caught in a jungle of red tape or turned down by "participating colleges," asked for guidance as to what to do next. They had exhausted the possibilities as they saw them.

Another group reported not receiving score reports or answers to their letters and questions from ETS. On the other hand, some participants questioned the veracity of colleges' statements that they hadn't received score reports from ETS and wondered if such statements weren't part of the "general run-around" given them by colleges.

A less frequently mentioned but nonetheless serious problem in dealing with colleges arose when prospective students were told that they must register before the college would consider granting them credit for CLEP examinations. Few students could take such a chance, for their decision to work toward a degree was dependent on lessening the financial burden of doing so via CLEP.

Of equal concern was the practice of a small number of colleges who put outright price tags on awards of credit for CLEP. Usually this ran about $50 a course but one college charged a full year's tuition for a year's credit through CLEP, and prospective students were told, "You might as well take the courses here since you're paying for them." In the above cases a participant could save, at the most, a year's time, but his financial investment would be many times greater than the rather modest examination fee.

To sum up, in one way or another, approximately one-eighth of the respondents reported problems or needs which they felt the sponsoring agency could or should do something about, in conjunction with participating colleges.

What Are, Indeed, the Programmatic Implications of Serving the Unorganized, Nontraditional Student?

Many of his/her specific problems have been stated earlier in this report. In general, they all reflect the absence of the traditional candidate's school through which he/she learns about a College Board/ETS Program, receives appropriate guidance and preparation, and is directed toward a using college, again with counsel, information, and the ease of mass migration.

If the College Board is really interested in serving this diverse, disparate, and unorganized clientele, it must face the fact that the traditional school will have to be replaced by Program services. These will cost

significant money and will require closer cooperation with other agencies and professions. But they will have to be introduced if the nontraditional student is to be regarded as a major client, rather than a marginal and petty annoyance.

Some of the more obvious changes that seem possible for ETS and CEEB to implement with minimum change of the existing corporate structures (the surface has only begun to be scratched) would include:

1. Rewriting the literature accompanying score reports to be intelligible to "those older students who are not familiar with educational jargon."

2. Instituting a subscription newsletter service to keep participants in CLEP up to date on new examination offerings, college policies, test dates and places, and the like.

3. Providing syllabi for all courses, accompanied by a list of book stores from which necessary materials may be purchased.

4. Exerting at least moral pressure on participating colleges not to use awards of credit for CLEP examinations as a money making scheme.

5. Increasing advertising, particularly through TV talk shows, places of employment, welfare and unemployment offices, and libraries.

Suggestions that would necessitate an enlargement of College Board-ETS services were made far more frequently than those that did not:

1. Respondents mentioned the need for a counseling service and resource centers more than three times as frequently as they did any other need. They were about equally divided as to whether such a service should be centralized (i.e., in Princeton or NYC) or decentralized. In either case, there should be provision for "counseling by mail" since one group of respondents reported themselves as "house bound" or as living in remote areas.

2. College Board and ETS should found a national educational data bank which would collect an individual's "credits" from whatever source over a long time, if necessary, and when requirements had been met, issue certificates or degrees. For just as respondents see the requirements for becoming such a super-accrediting agency as simpler than they are, they also find that "putting a degree together" from several different colleges, or through courses, examinations, and on-the-job training as much more difficult than it should be. Several of the most detailed suggested courses of action may be found in Appendix B.

Conclusions

1. As was pointed out earlier in this paper, the obtained sample is not representative of all CLEP takers. The respondent sample contains a disproportionate number of high scorers and, thus, of people apt to be well-disposed toward the Program. If this is indeed the case, it seems most likely that had an intensive follow-up been conducted and a 100% response rate obtained, the percentage of critical responses would have been much greater. Again, inferring from obtained data, they suggest that the most critical philosophical question to which the College Board and ETS must address themselves in the immediate future is whether the CLEP Program can or should continue to try to serve <u>everyone</u> with an interest in assessing either his own academic or vocational achievement or facilitating the attainment of a degree.

2. Perhaps it would be a <u>greater</u> service to <u>more</u> people to redefine the CLEP target population as the truly "nontraditional" student described in the Carnegie Grant, ascertain what services and materials members of

this group especially need, then work out how these special needs can be met and how recognition for achievement meriting credit by colleges or through certification can be assured for these people without further expense and frustration. In addition it seems that both the future target population and those outside of it could be spared much frustration and disappointment (and the College Board and ETS, therefore, would be spared much ill will and suspicion) if what the Program can realistically offer and what it does not or cannot be expected to do is clearly communicated.

3. However, when considering the above suggestions, no one should lose sight of the fact that for many people the current Program and its philosophy do and have provided a much needed contribution to their personal, academic and vocational aspirations. The author feels that by more specifically defining its target population--to itself and others--the Program can best realize its potential for such people and thereby serve its designated purpose. For it is not at all clear--to say the least--that "nontraditional" students can be well served without attention to their particular needs.

APPENDIX A

Comments from Respondents

Appendix A-1

A Sample of Statements about Problems with

Colleges and the Need for Counseling

44--Manager areospace sales

"When I received my scores from the test I sent copies to more than one hundred colleges in the area around my home. The replies varied from 'use CLEP to evaluate junior college level for transfer of credits' to 'register and we'll see what can be done about advanced credit.' Needless to say I was quite disappointed. In no case did any college volunteer to grant credit for CLEP scores. Several colleges did say they would give credit for as much as 20 hours of classes but it was not definite and could not be determined upon registration. All the colleges were listed as colleges that participated in the Program. I'm still interested but very disappointed."

49--Systems analyst

"After taking the test and receiving my scores I called three colleges listed in the list you sent in the San Diego area. All colleges assured me they would contact me if any programs to evaluate the scores and awards of credit were arranged. I never heard anything further. After numerous requests to these colleges, I finally gave up and decided the whole thing CLEP program was a farce. If I am incorrect, I would appreciate hearing from you."

38--Library aid

"The program would be improved by making the examinations program information available to registrars and counselors and publicizing it in college catalogs. Some of the colleges I contacted showed complete ignorance of the program and unbelievable red tape, I'm not in favor of fulfilling all college requirements by examination because I feel I learned as much or more from class discussions and other people's viewpoints as I did from the textbook. But thank you very much for providing this program; it was a great help to my continuing my higher education."

42--Broker

"The only college in my area that will grant credit at all will not grant more than 33 units towards electives only. This is equivalent to two semesters. This means only 19 semester units for electives, thus allowing only about 1 semester's gain for the CLEP examination and not two years as advertised by you."

35--County detective

"The opportunity afforded by the examination and my two years' award of college credit was monumental. However, I am completely frustrated by ability to be accepted by a college within commuting distance of my home. It was my understanding that . . . had agreed to participate. They have not done so and offer no encouragement. Finally I have received no certificate showing my two years of credit. Would you kindly expedite this as I need it to further my education and employment."

40--Part-time teacher aid

"My scores are presently under evaluation by . . . ; also have been promised verbally 30 extra credits by . . . after innumerable telephone calls and visits. I think they are stalling. I have the feeling that colleges are not anxious to help people in my position, but we are the very ones who appreciate and need this counseling. I would appreciate any comments you have regarding my case."

37--Montessori teacher

"Now in a hassle trying to get university to look at scores. I've had them sent to . . . twice and they claim both copies were never received. I get the feeling they are trying to tell me something."

51--Safety inspector

"The list of universities and institutions sent with the brochure is misleading. They may approve of the concept but in many cases are not willing to give credit for passing."

30--Tax consultant

"I think the ones giving the test should not encourage people to take the examinations for which they have not studied. I wanted to take only the English, History and Humanities test and prepare only for them. When I got there the instructor[proctor] suggested that I go on and take the math and science as well. I did so and did not pass on them and ruined my chances for being able to ever get college credit for them on the CLEP test. . . . will not give credit on subjects taken for the second time. I think this is a wonderful program and would like to see it expanded and take some more tests but without college cooperation I would be wasting my time. Thank you."

41--Motel manager

"The intent of the program is to give recognition to knowledge acquired by other than formal education is great. This program will not be effective until the educational institutions are made more aware of the program and accept the intent. I am glad that I participated in the program but feel only personal satisfaction was the result. I took the following steps in order to obtain more results from the program. 1. University . . . - Continuing education

41--Motel manager (cont'd)

department knew nothing of program. They did not feel that the school would ever accept the program. I asked them to investigate and advise. To date I have received no information. 2. . . . University - They knew nothing of the program. They did not feel that it was worthwhile to investigate. They feel that they are the responsibility to underprivileged minorities. No further action. 3. . . . State University - They were aware of the program. Thought in my case they would offer freshman level credits. As it was ninety miles one way I did not think I could pay to commute for night classes. 4. University of . . . - Wrote a letter to them asking if they participated in the program. They answered that they had eliminated the home study department. No further action taken. 5. Employment agency at . . . - Gave them the results of the test. They made no comment. No further action taken.

"I have seen your advertisements on TV and feel that it is a waste of money until the educational institutions take a more reasonable attitude."

60--Counselor in employment agency

"The test cost $15.00. There was no previous counseling. No one showed the slightest interest. When I got my scores later they were incomprehensible to me. I had no idea whether I had failed or passed or whether I could enter college or not and I never heard another word about my test from anywhere. In the booklet that accompanied my test score I read that no college within commuting distance would accept my grades even if I know what they are. I was given no help in deciding what to do next. Nothing in the literature helped me. Perhaps some connection with the colleges that give the test would be helpful so that one might go to a registrar after the result is known or a counselor might suggest what to do. But some kind of follow-up ought to be made to the people like myself who do not know the rules that govern formal education or what avenues are open. All your literature takes it for granted that everyone understands the very special jargon of formal education but this is not so, and the effort to decipher such language raises barriers to further pursuits. I am a voluminous reader. I could pass tests on all the great literatures both in English and French and Greek or ancient something, but I couldn't make sense out of your booklet so perhaps you should get an interpreter for that. The tests were interesting but the technique was more appropriate for people who had recently gone to school or been to college. I understood it was aimed at people like me who had not. What you need is to have someone who does not belong to the academic community participate in setting up your techniques and writing your literature."

35--Plant manager

"First, thank you for this opportunity to help. Additionally I think your program might be more successful if the participants continued their educational quests so possibly you could learn their desires before testing, then counsel them as to how to apply the results. Can you help me? I am lacking information and so far my attempts to get credit at the colleges I have contacted have failed. How much credit toward a business administration degree will someone give me? Do I qualify now for an associate degree? What alternatives are open to me?"

44--Administrative assistant for a school board

"We live in a small community with very few resources and very limited adult education programs available. Where can I write for help to set up an individual program for study? I am still vitally interested in working towards at least an associate degree but am stymied as how to set up a study course. Also I no longer have a copy of my transcript of the grades. Enclosed is one dollar which I believe was the cost and I would appreciate your sending me a copy."

50--Technical writer

" . . . University insisted on using my scores as a starting point which was less than I hoped for. The article I originally read pointed out that is it not possible to test yourself to a degree and why not? Well, it did me no good. Lately I had heard of some colleges in the East who were offering courses which a person can obtain a degree specifically in subjects they are interested in without setting foot on campus. Do you know where they are? Do you have more information on them? If so, please send to me. Think you were going in the right direction but need a fuller acceptance of the test."

64--Supervisor U.S. postal service wanting suitable volunteer work as available

"Upon receipt of CLEP scores I rather expected some sort of follow-up by a knowledgeable staff member who would offer pertinent counsel and guidance. I would suggest that future candidates be advised as to where that information is available in any given area."

Real estate salesman

"Thought I would be able to get college credit but couldn't find a college that knew anything about the CLEP examinations. I think colleges should be more informed and people taking the examinations should be given credit for their effort. I would appreciate a form or certificate showing that I had had the CLEP test or two years college equivalency. Maybe this in itself would be of some help. May I hear from you."

56--President of real estate sales and insurance company

"Was interested in determining if I could qualify for admission to a course leading to a MBA at . . . Was quite disappointed in the reception given to my question of admission to the MBA based on my CLEP results. Registrar didn't seem to have the slightest desire to even discuss the possibility. Made a trip to Princeton to inquire about what CLEP could do for me and received no satisfaction there either. Nobody seemed to know how CLEP results could be used to measure what level of education the testee had achieved. The people in the college admissions office seemed to have little or no knowledge of the program."

Appendix A-2

A Sample of Comments by Younger Students on College

Acceptance and Difficulty of CLEP Examinations

17 year old who took the test at 16, received 34 hours credit, and was graduated from high school as a junior

> "CLEP tests prove that my idea that school needn't take so many years as it does to finish. I think the CLEP examinations should be known to more high school sophomores, juniors and seniors so they don't have to waste college time on required subject matter that has been covered in high school. Taking the examinations enabled me to enter college as a sophomore for which I am very grateful."

18--Student

> "The university of . . . offered credit to entering students who took the test giving credit for scores over 450, requirement waivers for 390. This resulted in a lot of credit for a very large number of people and hardly anyone failed to make 400. The university has stopped giving credit but a lot of unqualified already have it. The CLEP program seems badly suited to the purpose it was used for. Could you adapt a test for granting credit to proficient entering students or at least suggest a realistic cut-off for colleges using CLEP this way. 600 would be more realistic. Your test was too easy on us. It seems your adult testees are not meeting real college standards. I didn't mean to sound obnoxious, I really enjoyed taking the test but it seems to me that they have been misused."

19--Student

> "I feel the tests were too easy and I've only placed my future in jeopardy because I am now exempt from classes that I need to study and improve in. I have never received more than a C in all my History and English compositions and yet I received college credit in this area. As a result I won't take it and I'll never learn to write. Frankly, I think these tests are a farce appealing to a dismal level of scholarship and giving college credit where it should not be."

19--Student

> "I realize that each college determines the standard at which they will allow college credit, but whatever the standard I really felt that the test was far too easy. Toughen them up and weed people right out of high school would be a lot better."

23--Doctoral student

"Your general examinations test knowledge which should be required of all high school graduates. They are definitely not college level examinations."

19--College student

"I took the CLEP test in June following my high school graduation and because of my scores was exempt from all general education requirement courses. The general examinations that I took were not sufficiently difficult to measure my competency in all of the areas. . . . Placement can perhaps be determined by your test but all the credits toward graduation that I received from CLEP testing is just ridiculous."

19--Student who won 45 hours of credit

"I feel the CLEP tests have been the greatest value to me of my college life so far because through them I have been able to make decisions about my future career and life plans and they have enabled me to pay for my own education. The tests have not only saved me money but time and energy that would have been wasted in general education courses. Finally the results I received from my test scores reinforced my decision on what I should go into. Thank you for this valuable program."

18--Senior at the University of . . .

"I was just starting college at the age of 14 and the Dean of Admissions was interested in what my scores would be in addition to the fact that I could get credit. I think lots of people in the high schools could pass these tests and get into college when I did and avoid the unnecessary and often wasted years of idleness and disillusionment in high school when perhaps CLEP can indicate to colleges the readiness of a prospective student to enter their institution."

Appendix A-3

A Selection of Comments and

Suggestions for the Program

18--Manager of a tree nursery

"You need more advertising. It is disheartening to take all five general exams, do well on them all only to find out they cannot be used to their fullest advantage, and it costs so much to send your scores to several colleges and shop around for the best offer of credit and while you are paying for the postage, information as to the length of time credits may be applied and so on. I wrote regarding this matter to your testing service as well as checking at my testing center but received no adequate answer from either. In large bold print 'DO YOU HAVE AN ANSWER'? Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinions on CLEP."

32--Sales representative

"Why if some colleges and universities accept CLEP don't all the schools? You could do a much better job than you have of promoting CLEP to institutions of higher learning. You don't have to sell people on your program; you must sell schools (colleges) on the idea of accepting your credits. What good are CLEP credits if no one will accept them?"

Student in medical school

"I'm glad for the credit I received from CLEP. The only bad CLEP experience I had was your laxity with respect to processing my paperwork. You lost my check and held up my test results until you straightened up the confusion."

31--Head Start worker

"I didn't do well on the tests as I didn't have any literature on what would be helpful beforehand. I felt that I would really have to work at furthering my education as I found the test extremely hard for me. I believe that the CLEP examinations are a wonderful way for people to continue their education. What could be considered an impossible dream could become a reality with the help of these examinations."

28--Student at . . .

> "Sir. Although I asked you to send my test results through the registrar of . . . , he tells me you have not done so. Please take care of this for me. Thanks. RSVP"

42--Police officer

> "It has been almost four years since I have taken the general battery of CLEP tests. I can recall my happiness and satisfaction when I received the results. This happiness was shattered after consultation with the Dean of Admissions at a local college which was listed in the CLEP material. I hope the program has been improved in coordination at the very least. Let me say that the CLEP test was a great help to me anyway. The results were made a part of my personal file and I am quite sure the scores played a part in my being selected to attend . . . University."

30--Chicano organizer

> "These tests are made for the white man. It will be very easy for you to throw my survey in the trash but I challenge you to respond to what I have said. I challenge you to act on common sense. Any person who was sincerely interested in evaluation where we are at in education can only see that we are failing. I am deeply disturbed with the CLEP because you cannot test a minority with the results of the Anglo-man."

40--Service station operator/owner

> "My own test results were severely damaged when I took the test 'Cold Turkey'. I did not receive preparatory info until the day before my test results! It gave everyone else a great head start and they knew what to expect, whereas, I was told 'You have 15 minutes to read instructions and answer first 30 questions!!' I had 8 minutes used up reading the directions. My times and questions are not necessarily accurate but I honestly feel I would have scored much higher with some knowledge in advance of test procedures and content. It would greatly help to be sure my case was not repeated by others. (1) Can I take the exam on the basis on what I had explained? (2) Can it be retaken for my own reasons?"

37--Insurance examiner

> "Dear Sir: I am extremely interested in your program and always have been. I want to wish you luck and offer my assistance in any-way that I may be capable of doing. I volunteer myself as a guinea pig to apply to your program to begin a master's program."

The letter goes on after several pages of what she plans to do, asking our assistance with this plea,

> "Answer inquiries mailed direct to you. I have answered yours but you have never answered mine."

39--Social worker and public assistant

"I hoped for job advancement. Since I was unable to make a dent in acceptance at that time at any of the local schools I feel my time was wasted. I have never learned if I did well or poorly for previous education. I was out a day's work, $15.00 and a 170 mile trip equaled exactly zero. An article featured CLEP in St. Louis Post in 11 or 12, 1967 it sounded great. Here was a chance for college credit. Meeting with so much opposition I became discouraged, however. Can you tell me what my scores really were? Does anyone care?"

50--Male technical writer

Suggestion: "That the candidate's copy of general examinations scores could be placed with a sheet of paper showing percentile rank included rather than having this information separate."

42--Full-time college student

"It changed my life. Wee! And How! Helped me get started in the university. Found I wasn't dumb after all. Started me on a lifetime of learning and growing. Took the ceiling off achievement."

39--Secretary in county welfare office:

"I am happy to cooperate with your program by completing the enclosed questionnaire. I personally feel that the program could be of great benefit to people who have been unable to complete their formal higher education. I had been searching for ways to obtain college credit without burdening my family by leaving my employment or our home. There is no college in our community. I was attracted to CLEP by a magazine story in Readers Digest as it seemed that it might help me towards my goal. The high scores I achieved gave me confidence that I could compete with young people recently experienced in structured study. Therefore, I had the courage to contact the college and begin formal, although part-time schooling again. I am now more determined for my degree. I think a valuable service would be to make some counseling on how to most effectively use the CLEP examination. Also I would like continuing literature on the changes and opportunities available as your program expands. However, because of difficulties with college officials who are only vaguely aware of the program the benefits that seemingly would have been gained from CLEP did not actually occur. For me it was very expensive as I had the expense of the exam plus the cost of enrollment in this private college which is more expensive than state schools. It would have been well worth the extra money to go to a private college <u>if</u> they had actually credited me with some college hours based on the CLEP scores. The worst part of it though was that the experience made me bitter. I had just become encouraged that there might be a way for a person with other responsibilities to also complete his education by the CLEP program and was very fired up. However, your questionnaire has again stimulated my interest and I feel that I will try for credit again at another college, if necessary. Please forward this letter to the proper department of X college and notify me whom I should contact. I should be glad to pay the expenses involved. My full name and social security numbers are . . . "

APPENDIX B

Differing Points of View on Expanding the CLEP Program Toward Degree by Examination and a Detailed Plan for an External "General Degree" as Well as Comments on the Need for "Practical" Exams in Technical and Vocational Areas

Appendix B

53-year-old female

"A Plan for Earlier Completion of General Education Requirements for Adults"

"I think it is possible for a person who is working and supporting a family to be given a reading list for specific courses, be examined and awarded credit for those courses without the necessity of doing written assignments for correction, such as occurs in correspondence courses. In addition, CLEP could inform these people of the courses, which are best studied in a classroom, such as Biology, Chemistry, Math, etc., so that their study program would combine home and classroom study.

Using this method, I think more people, particularly poor and working class mothers, could complete their first 2 years of general education requirements. When their children were more self-sufficient, they could then enter the classroom, with all its advantages, for the last 2 years of a 4 year course of study. Also with 2 years schooling behind them, they would have a better chance of scholarship help."

45-year-old retired military male

"Not any of these tests are considered to be worthwhile unless your organization will establish a universally accepted scoring system and grant college credits which can be transferred and fully utilized.

It is very depressing to contact individual colleges requesting credit for the CLEP scores and receive a cold, indifferent response. I would take several other CLEP tests if I knew I would receive appropriate college credits from this single contact point in a prompt, efficient manner.

Based on my personal contact with three colleges, . . . I do not have any confidence of attaining college credits from any but one and these will only be granted after an extensive period of time and trouble.

A positive, central point which can give actual college credits as a direct result of scores earned from the CLEP is the only real answer for working people."

22--Who is now in college but who has his electrician's license

"Despite having had four years English and science, three years history, math, Latin not to mention what I picked up on my own, the state refused me a high school diploma necessary to gain decent employment and I didn't have the money, etc., to return to school at that time. Zola(?) once said that if he couldn't convince the public by his quality he'd do it with the quantity. In like manner the CLEP is one of a number of objective tests which indicates I'm too well educated for my own good or so it would seem. I am still serious in my belief that too many educated Americans have been and continue to be shafted by our socio-economic system which will consider any diploma superior to any type of objective test or transcript. I've expressed my beliefs on several occasions to governmental leaders and to educators as well as to CLEP officials. I myself gave up and am now attending college classes which I cannot afford in order to say that I've been to

22--Who is now in college but who has his electrician's license (continued)

college. I often feel like an ass among asses. The lack of objective standards in formal college is to me rather depressing. I wish CLEP were able to get employers to provide their own objective standards for employment in place of high school and college diplomas, but this hope appears to have very little prospect of success."

63--Female engineering associate

"Will be honest. I did not think much of the CLEP examination. I went back to college after my mother died when I was 62 and for forty hours of work after being out of school all those years I made 8 A's and 5 B's. On the CLEP examinations I made low scores. I considered them not at all indicative of my knowledge or ability as I have always scored high on tests and IQ in the past. I didn't even care if you had my grades sent to a college. Was I wrong? I was picked as a candidate for Phi Beta Kappa National Honor Fraternity of which I am now a member. I would be willing to take an examination if it were more practical, although I have been, in addition to an engineer, a clerk typist, a personnel clerk, an interviewer, a supervisor, statistician, technical writer, bookkeeper, etc., I would like now that I am retired to be a medical record librarian or do social service work. But I do not have the particular degrees required. I am still very active, alert and an interested individual and I believe age should not enter into jobs as much as it does nor should formal education. I know many people without degrees who are much more qualified for jobs than the people who have them with degrees. I enjoy school, I learn much. What we learn in schools is not what it takes to do a good job and schooling enriches one; most of it is not helpful or practical in earning a living."

49--Secretary

"First I was just curious to see how I rated in comparison with individuals who had college credits. Then I thought why not get a college degree in something I like. I have more confidence now. The exam put me in sophomore standing. This whole thing has been a revelation and a wonderful thing for me. It is time consuming and difficult but the rewards are boundless. I think emphasis should be made on the fact that resuming college study makes one a more understanding person and one's retirement years can be infinitely enriched by such a study. I was surprised and overjoyed to receive 46 credit hours for my exams, but I wouldn't want to earn all my credits that way. I enjoy going to college and the intellectual atmosphere. Going to classes is second nature to me and I would really hate to leave off. As far as I'm concerned I like to take courses for the rest of my life. It's a pity that my employment gets in the way. Just think how I'll enjoy my retirement! I can go full time then."

Teacher--Behavioral sciences

"We have discussed this among a group of associates and none of us feels it would be of benefit to people to be able to fulfill the requirements for a college degree solely by passing an examination. This seems to defeat the purpose of a formal education, that is, to produce a well-rounded, free-thinking and enthusiastic individual."

40--Systems analyst

"Please prevail upon colleges and personnel officers to recognize a general four year college equivalency exam plus specialized equivalency exams as required. Such exams should not be based on rote remembrances of irrelevancies but should effectively measure basic knowledge of English, Humanities, Math, Natural and Social Sciences plus an ability to think, to be imaginative, to communicate effectively. Thank you for the opportunity to express my wishes and views. Shalom."

48--President of Missouri oil company

"CLEP brought my goal of a Fine Arts degree closer and gave me additional confidence, however, with over 20 years of background in many art media I find it somewhat frustrating to take credit courses in basic art and cover material of which I have substantial knowledge only because I need the credits. It seems to me that a provision should be made whereby one would have the opportunity to challenge a course in art through a demonstration of one's ability to handle the subject matter. Presently I am taking a course in basic drawing and basic and advanced sculpture and although the instructors are well qualified and knowledgeable persons I would have welcomed the opportunity to place my portfolio before them for an examination to be judged for credit rather than spend 135 hours in a classroom to acquire the 9 credit hours involved. Many thanks for this opportunity to present my views."

26--Market analyst--stock exchange

"I would like to see a comprehensive program to enable adults to complete degree requirements. Such a program should be balanced with self-education correspondence, cassettes and classroom study."

60--Female accountant

"The idea is a sound one and perhaps should be expanded to test one's level in a field where he has 'learned by doing.' For instance, I'm sure I could have had better positions in accounting had I been able to show the test results to a perspective employer. Instead I would be passed over and the position would go to someone with a degree, usually a man and I would have to settle for a lesser starting position and prove my value by doing. Meanwhile, the degree person has advanced and I found myself forever on a lower rock. A certificate awarded after thorough testing would be most helpful."

51--Microbiologist

"I certainly would be interested in filling all the requirements for a college degree by examination. I've had a total of 11 months' formal training in microbiology but have been in the field for 21 years. I've been repeatedly told I have tremendous knowledge and skill also, I was trained at Walter Reed General Hospital Professional Service schools, 14 months and 4 days. Research work in officially recognized journals, some with grants from NIH. I make a total of $21,000 per year and am a supervisor in the microbiology department at the moment. I would like to get some credit by exam for self-learning and experience in the field."

42--Scientist

"Don't stop at the BA level. Find a way that one can certify some part of Masters and Doctors degree through CLEP. Testing out of courses that are not relevant to the student's proposed area of concentration within the Masters program would allow us saving in time and money needed to complete the program."

38--Supervisor, FAA

"This examination and the concept of degree by examination provides a vehicle whereby educational levels can be both quickly and easily provided. In my case I had over 3 years of college in four colleges and on two sides of the ocean and was not able to get my records together. I now have an LIM and have been admitted to the bar, but as yet have no undergraduate degree. If I could obtain a degree without disrupting my occupation, I would. There are numbers of people who are in similar situations and would therefore recommend that any effort that would assist these people be considered."

45--Ship builder

"Not any of these tests are considered to be worthwhile unless your organization will establish a universally accepted scoring system and grant college credit which can then be transferred and fully utilized. It is very depressing to contact individual colleges requesting credits for the CLEP scores and receive a cold, indifferent response. I would take several other CLEP tests if I knew I could receive appropriate college credits from this single contact point in a prompt, efficient manner. A positive central point which can give actual college credits as a direct result of scores earned from the CLEP is a necessity for people like me."

59--Machine operator--degreaser in Maine

"CLEP meant much to me. I have more confidence in my mental ability now; at least, I now realize that I am a mentally progressive person with a good potential even if for reasons beyond my control I may never develop it fully. If only I could, but have been prevented for reasons of lack of funds, time and age, a disadvantaged background generally. I would have liked to have been a writer I think but circumstances dictate otherwise. I am living my life successfully as I can, however, and can continue to take studies by correspondence as much as I can. If only we could strive to obtain recognition on the validity of CLEP scores by all colleges and other educational institutions of higher education for suitable credit. Also obtain recognition by industry and labor of the validity of CLEP scores for educational equivalent qualifications in obtaining employment. You should also offer educational and vocational guidance for disadvantaged. I am much too far away to go to any college, yet I continue to study journalism, radio, TV repair, commercial art, cartooning and like to read archeology and anthropology when I can get books from our little library."

46--Dress contractor

"Yea CLEP! Also you should consider exams in all trades such as plumber, carpenter, mason, blueprint reading, automobile mechanics. These all constitute disciplines and should therefore be regarded as part of the educational process. People who possess such knowledge should receive credit or recognition applicable to a liberal program degree; presently they receive no credit at all. Under present systems of education, the disciplines are primarily concerned with the past notion that education is learning. This is not true. Education as I define it consists of acquiring the ability of learning how to learn and using the mind as a tool. The more areas touched by the mind the more integrated the mind becomes. I feel that the tradesman has a more integrated study program than a simple discipline such as a foreign language. That is to say, a plumber must know more areas than a student who is studying French. A plumber must also use more creative processes of thinking than a French student. Who gets credit toward a degree?"

37--Social worker

"Have you not known people who when confronted with a written test on mechanics it would scare them pitifully, but turned loose in a shop, could take it apart and put it back together again? Isn't it possible to construct some kind of testing program that would evaluate this person with this kind of intelligence?"

20--College senior

"The College Level Examination Program should be more creative by allowing the student to express himself in a less rigid more freelance manner, specifically stressing thought, philosophy and knowledge of reality, rather than setting tests to measure passive learning."

43--Model project for elderly project coordinator

"CLEP may very well have been a turning point in my life since the exams in addition to moving up from a $7,000 to a $15,000 a year position, I have written and sold several magazine articles, features and other journalistic endeavors. My goal is to own my own firm and I would take advantage of opportunities for further study to broaden my knowledge."

37--Accountant, who has experienced utter frustration in the Portland area; nevertheless he writes . . .

"Please continue this program and develop it further. I'm thoroughly proficient in my field and have worked many long hours and many long years without a vacation to achieve this. Please help me and other kindred souls to find a way of: 1. Advancing our skills and 2. Showing some valid written evidence to this certificate conscious society that we are really capable productive individuals. Lest there be any confusion I do not want a free degree but only the opportunity to test for that which I feel already competent in and study for that which I'm not. Then when one works 40 hours a week, studies 10 hours a week,

37--Accountant (continued)

drives twice a week 110 miles round trip at 24 degrees below zero, manages the second highest course score in a graduate school business course and gets the boot because the dean of the school of business administration raised hob with the dean of the graduate school because 'I don't have adequate credentials' you can almost cry, but not quite, I won't quit. I'm very bright and willing to work step by step; I'll make it. But your help is needed, if not by me, at least by others like me who need encouragement to keep trying and understanding that not all people in the field of education are as bone headed as Dean . . . at the University . . . . At that very same institution the Director of Admissions'words of encouragement were priceless gems to us. Thank you for your help and your interest."

30--Income tax auditor

"Some form of refresher course should be offered prior to the taking of the general exams. Some sort of syllabus or it might be in the form of books, tapes or a short course under classroom conditions. This would allow a person to see his problem areas and correct them before taking an exam, failing it and becoming discouraged."

53--President of private vocational school

"What about a national central bank for the collection of various educational experiences equated to college credits including CLEP tests, scores from all courses, life experiences, etc.? These can be accumulated over a lifetime if necessary to meet the standards set for various degrees. When the standard is met then the national central college credit bank can issue a recognized degree acceptable as one from a regionally accredited college."

42--Full-time college student

"Although my university gave me 24 hours' credit and advanced standing it did not help me cut down on the time it has taken to earn a BA; however, it did open the door and that was invaluable. On the basis of CLEP they were more willing to give me a chance. My record should make a very good example of what an adult can do. My CLEP scores were really quite low compared with high school test scores which the university usually accepts. I have been a full time student for 4 years. In July 72 will have completed the equivalent of two majors, English and Elementary Education and a total of 150 semester hours with an overall average of 3.77 and 4.0 in the majors. Universities should be less reluctant to admit and accept CLEP exams for credit if they were more aware of results like this."

26--Parking lot attendant

"I would like to say that I am very much in favor of the principles to which this program is devoted, but I fear that they will not work out in practice. I have found the college credit correspondence courses to be the most helpful for me. I think they should count 100% toward a degree because you have to cover the subject, you cannot skip out of classes for several weeks because of the Kent State incident or a major political assassination. Also they are open to everyone and not just those wealthy enough to attend a university. This business of getting a college degree is something that often reflects the financial circumstances of the student's parents more than it does any abilities that he has or does not have. Thomas Jefferson who founded the University of Virginia was hoping to open educational doors to everyone and certainly would not close them to anyone. I am sure that he would join with me in calling for university extension division credit courses to be 100% acceptable for degree credit. I think that we are returning to feudalism in America. In feudal times the nobles purchased their titles from the king which made their children qualified to do certain skilled jobs. In America today the wealthy purchase a degree from a university which is something on the order of a title of nobility. I believe that men should stand on their merit and not on their title or degree."

47-year-old male Washington, D. C. bureaucrat (who completed grade 10 before CLEP)

"I would like to see an external 'general' degree offered and based on the following philosophy and structure:

Philosophy

1. Learning takes place in many ways in a modern technological society.
2. Much unconscious learning takes place even though it may not be sought.
3. A valid, realistic, and adequate assessment of non-traditional learning can be made by a scientific sampling of one's knowledge and intellectual skills.
4. Adults have the right in a free society to structure their own educational programs, and should not be required to conform to externally dictated curricula.
5. Adults have the right to learn in any way they choose, and should not be forced to attend a resident school to gain recognition for their educational achievements.
6. Adults should have easy access to a testing system that will validate their knowledge and intellectual skills.

Structure of the degree program

The degree structure I propose would differ in several ways from the conventional one.

First, it would recognize that the concept of the traditional degree is archaic, i.e., the emphasis on the retention of great numbers of facts as a primary degree definition criteria in a rapidly evolving technological society is irrational. A degree, or perhaps more accurately, a "certification" based on the traditional structure quickly becomes outdated and

47-year-old male Washington, D. C. bureaucrat (continued)

redundant. The implications of this statement are, of course, that intellectual skills and a limited number of general concepts are more likely to be retained for any appreciable length of time because of the continuing honing and selective reinforcement effect daily problem solving has on our minds. It also implies that the development and retention of intellectual skills is relatively more important to one's survival in a modern urban society than the retention of current dogma.

"The traditional degree is a lie, or at best a misrepresentation in that it implies a continuing proficiency in all that the student has been exposed to during his or her incubation in a resident college. However, the new degree would recognize the limitations of the human mind. It would admit that the retention of a limited number of concepts is all that we can honestly hope for and therefore the emphasis should be put on retaining those that will help the average adult successfully cope with life. It would recognize that intelligent adults will learn to use their minds and to establish realistic life cycle priorities through the process of living, and should be granted recognition for what they have learned the hard way. In short, the primary purpose of higher education and the awarding of degrees should be to develop and give recognition to rational thought. The conventional college degree structure is inefficient and intellectually dishonest. This is prima facie evidence of the failure of our colleges to produce more rational human beings (including college faculty and administrators). The rational person can hardly be criticized for declining to attend a resident college for fear of intellectual contamination.

"The new degree would not be awarded after an arbitrary number of years of study. Rather, the term "degree" would be used in its purest sense, i.e., the location of one's degree of intellectual growth on a rather wide scale. The new degree would show the true position of one's development in relation to others and in relation to the outer limits of a discipline. This would be true regardless of the source of one's knowledge and intellectual skills. Here is a suggested scheme for the award of degrees based on test scores:

AWARD	Test Score
Bachelors Degree (honors)	Upper half of first quartile
Bachelors Degree	Lower half of first quartile
Associate Degree	Second quartile
Diploma	Third quartile
Certificate	Upper half of fourth quartile

The new degree structure would allow us to avoid hairsplitting definitions regarding whether the examination questions are at the 100, 200, 300, or 400 levels of difficulty. Rather, the examinations would consist of questions of an extremely wide range of difficulty, the more difficult ones being given more weight for score purposes. There would be no arbitrary upper limit of difficulty. The questions would be designed primarily to measure analytical and decision making skills. However, they would require

47-year-old male Washington, D. C. bureaucrat (continued)

a general knowledge of contemporary concepts and terminology. The new structure would also disregard the question of what is meant by 'at the graduate level'. Any question that could be answered by an analysis of the data given would be classified at the undergraduate, or at worst, the 'advanced undergraduate' level. That is, masters degrees would be awarded after the successful presentation of a very specialized and comprehensive thesis only.

"The objective of the examinations would be to achieve a general measurement of one's intellectual skills, and peripherally, one's knowledge. I believe this approach is realistic and therefore reasonable. The in-depth testing of one's knowledge of great masses of trivia is an exercise in futility, or at best is unnecessary in that much of the minutia taught in college 'general education' courses (biological terms ad nauseum, etc.) is irrelevant by most anyone's standards (except the particular department chairman concerned). This is of course a result of the operation of Parkinson's First Law, i.e., the exotic and esoteric expands to fill the time allotted for it!

"The new degree would be structured around those areas of knowledge most relevant to the 'survival with quality' of a modern adult. Specifically, the degree examinations would consist of practical, life related questions on logic, ethics, social institutions and problems, history and philosophy of science, arts, human relations, law, social ideologies (economic, political, etc.), and foreign relations. Questions regarding history, mathematics, and written communication skills would be integrated into the exams just listed.

"The questions would be as nontechnical as possible. For example, the approach used in An Introduction to Economic Reasoning by Robinson, Morton, and Caldwell illustrates how a technical subject can be made palatable and understandable without dilution. In summary, the tests would deal primarily with the perennial problems of society, and with generalities rather than specifics."